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SUBJECT: Chairman's summary of September 1, 2008 Special
Envoys meeting of the Joint Monitoring Group

Following is the English version of the chairman's summary of the September 1, 2008 meeting at Special Envoys level of the Joint Monitoring Group. A reporting cable on the meeting will be sent via septel.

Begin text of chairman's summary

Joint Monitoring Group for the Nairobi Communique of 9 November 2007
Fifth meeting of Special Envoys
Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo, 1 September 2008

SUMMARY BY THE PRESIDENCY

11. Introduction

Representatives of the signatories of the Nairobi Communique of 9 November 2007 met on 1 September 2008 in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, to assess progress made in the implementation of the Communique. This was the fifth meeting at Special Envoy level of the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) for the implementation of the Nairobi Communique, and the second chaired by the European Union. The four previous meetings, of which three were chaired by the United Nations, were held in Goma on 16 December 2007, in Brussels on 15 February 2008, in New York on 18 April 2008 and in Rubavu (formerly Gisenyi) on 4 June 2008.

Participants at the meeting in Kinshasa, which was chaired by Ambassador van de Geer, European Union Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region, included Ambassador Seraphin N'Gwej, Special Envoy of the Democratic Republic of Congo for the Great Lakes Region, Ambassador Richard Sezibera, Special Envoy of Rwanda for the Great Lakes Region, Mr Doss, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ambassador Bah, African Union Representative for the Great Lakes, Ambassador Mulamula, Executive Secretary of the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region, Ambassador Mamabolo, Special Envoy of South Africa for Central Africa, and Mr Tim Shortley, Senior Adviser for conflict resolution to the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs of the United States Government. Ms Frazer, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs of the United States Government, who was on an official visit to the DRC came to meet the Joint Monitoring Group and took an active part in proceedings for part of the afternoon.

12. Increasing actions directed towards Rwandan armed groups to encourage them to lay down their arms peacefully and return to Rwanda

The DRC delegation gave a presentation to the Special Envoys on current efforts to convince Rwandan armed groups to opt for disarmament and voluntary repatriation.

The DRC delegation informed the Special Envoys about the ongoing

disarmament of RUD fighters: about sixty fighters handed in their weapons on 31 July 2008 in the transit camp set up by the DRC in Kasiki, with the support of the Eglise du Christ au Congo (ECC) and funding from the Norwegian Government. The weapons were handed over to MONUC for destruction. The DRC, which had encountered problems in using biometric identification equipment involving iris recognition, was currently increasing its reception capacity so that it could handle a greater number of fighters, and was seeking other financial help from the international community. Registration operations, and the search for a relocation site in the DRC outside the area occupied by the RUD would begin shortly. The Rwandan delegation wished to obtain information about the identity of the disarmed fighters and hoped that their stay in the Kasiki camp would be limited.

The DRC delegation also took stock of discussions under way with FOCA, with ECC mediation: at a meeting of DRC representatives with FOCA representatives in Nyabiondo on 6 August 2008, the latter accepted the principle of disarmament. A further meeting is due to be held to establish the practical arrangements for implementation.

The Rwandan delegation described the improvements which it was intending to make to its communication strategy, particularly by making more use of the testimonies of fighters who had been repatriated, as well as by organising reconnaissance visits for delegations of families who were waiting to return.

The Special Envoys welcomed the beginning of the RUD's disarmament as a promising sign, and encouraged the DRC to pursue its efforts with FOCA. They called on both countries to continue their efforts to raise awareness at all levels, including the highest level.

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The DDRRR section of MONUC is playing and must continue to play a key role in the awareness-raising operations. It was noted in particular that the dropping by MONUC helicopters of pamphlets over the zones occupied by ex-FAR/Interahamwe fighters was another method which had recently proven to be very effective in obtaining defections from amongst the Rwandan armed groups.

13. Increased military pressure on Rwandan armed groups to make them return to Rwanda

MONUC and the DRC reported on the measures they had taken to step up the military pressure on the Rwandan armed groups, and on the adaptations made to the initial plan following the meeting held under the aegis of MONUC between the Chiefs of Staff of the Armed Forces of the DRC (the FARDC) and the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF).

The concept of four triangles had been replaced with that of four considerably larger zones. The deployment of battalions had been delayed, and was still limited to eight. Two battalions which had finished their training would be deployed in September 2008, and four others were still being trained. It was stressed that the FARDC contribution was the key element in the success of this plan; the speed with which it was executed would largely depend on the rate at which the FARDC provided the necessary forces to make up the 26 battalions which were due to be deployed in total (in principle by the middle of 2009). Depending on the resources made available, operations in each of the four zones would pass progressively through three stages, namely a "yellow" phase aimed at containing the FDLR, an "orange" phase of increased pressure, and a "red" phase of using force.

The plan must be implemented in parallel with the re-establishment of the authority of the State in the zones concerned.

A meeting of military experts was due to set indicators to evaluate the results of the implementation of the plan.

Rwanda asked for attention to be paid as a priority to the FDLR units near the border, which might attempt to disrupt the parliamentary elections to be held in a few days' time.

14. Stepping up measures against the external leaders of the

ex-FAR/Interahamwe

The European Union Special Representative explained that European countries had recently enhanced their cooperation in this area in the framework of Eurojust, and in particular had arrested the Secretary General of the FDLR, Calixte Mbarushimana; the FDLR President, Ignace Murwanashyaka was under house arrest, but unfortunately this did not prevent him from continuing to act via the internet.

The Congolese side stressed the extent to which the arrest of Mr Mbarushimana had destabilised the military leadership of the FDLR and was therefore a very positive step.

The United States had issued wanted notices under their Reward for Justice programme for 13 individuals suspected of participating in the 1994 genocide who were active in the FDLR. The US representative, Mr Shortley, also said that the United States was pressing for the speedy adoption by the United Nations Security Council, as a complement to Resolution 1804 adopted on 13 March 2008 on the ex-FAR/Interahamwe, of an updated list of individuals against whom international sanctions should be applied.

15. JMG working group based in Goma

Veronique Aulagnon, political adviser to the EU Special Representative, gave an overview of the activities of the working group, the JMG Task Force, which meets every week either for discussions in Goma or for visits on one side of the border or the other. At this stage, it is the only permanent contact point between the DRC and Rwanda. Recently its work has covered the beginning of the RUD's disarmament, the awareness-raising programmes set up by MONUC, the DRC and Rwanda, the deployment of the FARDC and MONUC in and around the four triangles, and the counting of the number of repatriated fighters. The Task Force also provided its support to the beginning of the RUD's disarmament by being present at Kasiki on 31 July 2008.

The Special Envoys encouraged the Task Force to continue its work, particularly its visits on the ground and the harmonisation of statistical tools.

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16. Other items

Two other points in particular were discussed: the question of whether it was appropriate for Rwanda to issue an international arrest warrant against Mr Rafiki Yasseen (alias John Mwindo) who, according to the DRC, was playing a positive role in raising awareness to encourage the disarmament and repatriation of ex-FAR/Interahamwe; and the prospects for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Kinshasa and Kigali.

17. The Nairobi and Goma processes and Security Sector Reform

The Special Envoys stressed that progress in implementing the Nairobi Communique of 9 November 2007 and progress in implementing the acts of engagement signed in Goma on 23 January 2008 between the DRC Government and the Congolese armed groups were mutually reinforcing. They also stressed that Security Sector Reform was the third essential element for the stabilisation of the region. During discussions on these processes, the Rwandan side solemnly declared that Rwanda had not assisted and would not assist the CNDP, a matter on which the Congolese side expressed doubts.

18. Next meeting

It was decided that the next Special Envoys meeting of the JMG would be held on Monday 10 November 2008 in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda.

During October the chairman of the JMG will distribute a draft evaluation report on the implementation of the Nairobi Communique.

End text of Chairman's summary

GARVELINK